

Message Text

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41

ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NEA-07 PM-03 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 14788

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, XF

SUBJECT: EEC POLICY ON MIDDLE EAST

REF: A) STATE 232563 B) STATE 231823 C) ROME 10789

1. MFA DEPUTY OFFICE DIRECTOR FOR ME AFFAIRS (VENTO) GAVE
EMBOFF FOLLOWING RUNDOWN ON LIKELY COURSE OF EEC POLICY ON
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MIDDLE EAST.

2. VENTO WAS DUBIOUS THAT ANY RADICAL CHANGES WILL OCCUR IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. HE DOUBTS THAT A REVISED EC DECLARATION IS IN THE CARDS, BELIEVES THAT ESCALATION OF THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE TO THE GENERAL COMMISSION LEVEL IS NOT LIKELY THIS YEAR, BELIEVES PLO WILL NOT ATTAIN INDEPENDENT IDENTITY AT EURO-ARAB TABLE, AND THINKS "POLITICAL DISCUSSIONS" ARE LIKELY TO REMAIN TABOO IN THIS FORUM. (DEPARTMENT WILL NOTE THIS ASSESSMENT RUNS COUNTER TO THAT OF FONMIN RUMOR GIVEN SECRETARY IN NEW YORK, PER PARA 4, REF. A.)

3. A NEW DECLARATION BY THE NINE IS PROBABLY UNATTAINABLE SIMPLY BECAUSE THE NOVEMBER 1973 DECLARATION STILL OCCUPIES THE APPROXIMATE POLITICAL CENTER OF THE COMPOSITE VIEW OF THE NINE. SOME STATES WOULD "LIKE TO MOVE FORWARD", OTHERS WOULD SECRETLY PREFER SOME RETROGRADE STEP, STILL OTHERS ARE SIMPLY CONTENT WITH THE PRESENT STATEMENT. MOREOVER THERE IS A GENERAL RELUCTANCE TO GET FURTHER ENMESHED IN A SITUATION WHICH THE NINE CAN'T INFLUENCE VERY MUCH. FOR THESE REASONS THE OCTOBER 6 ROME MEETING OF ME EXPERTS PRODUCED NO MOVEMENT. THE REAL INTEREST NOW LIES IN SUFFICIENT COORDINATION AMONG THE NINE TO ASSURE A UNITED FRONT AT UNGA, AVOIDING THE UNFORTUNATE SPLITS OF LAST YEAR.

4. VENTO DENIED (CONTRARY TO FRG'S BLECH'S RECOUNTAL TO S/P DIRECTOR LORD (REF B) THAT THE NINE ARE UNDER ANY IMMEDIATE PRESSURES TO ESCALATE THE EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE TO THE GENERAL COMMISSION LEVEL. THE NINE ARE AWAITING A DECISION, FROM THE ARAB LEAGUE MEETING ON OCTOBER 18, AS TO DATE, VENUE AND RECOMMENDED LEVEL OF THE NEXT SESSION OF THE DIALOGUE (REF C). WHILE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE LEAGUE MAY POSE GENERAL COMMISSION LEVEL (AND INDEPENDENT PLO STATUS) AS PRECONDITIONS, VENTO THOUGHT IT UNLIKELY. THE ARABS KNOW THAT THE NINE ARE OPPOSED TO POLITICAL CONTENT IN THE DIALOGUE, A CONTENT WHICH THE GENERAL COMMISSION WOULD ALMOST NECESSARILY ENTAIL. MOREOVER, THE NINE ARE NOT READY TO ACCEPT THE PLO, SO IDENTIFIED, AT THE TABLE. VENTO ADDED THAT BRITISH HAVE PICKED UP RUMORS THAT SOME 300 HOTEL ROOMS HAVE BEEN RESERVED IN ABU DHABI FOR THE NEXT MEETING OF THE DIALOGUE. IF TRUE, "THIS WOULD MEAN THE ARABS ARE COUNTING ON A MEETING WHICH THEY KNOW WOULD NOT TAKE PLACE IF THEY PUSH THE POLITICAL OR PLO ASPECTS TOO FAR." CONFIDENTIAL

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5. IT IS POSSIBLE SAID VENTO, TO BUILD A HYPOTHESIS WHICH WOULD PERMIT A MEETING AT THE GENERAL COMMISSION LEVEL. THIS WOULD INVOLVE THE UNLIKELY: NO SEPARATE LABEL FOR PLO, FIRM ARAB AGREEMENT TO ESCHEW THE POLITICAL, AND REPRESENTATION BY HIGH-LEVEL ("SUB-SECRETARY") SPECIALISTS IN AGRICULTURE, FINANCE, ETC., RATHER THAN BY AMBASSADORS WHO MIGHT ALLOW THE DISCUSSION TO WANDER INTO THE POLITICAL ARENA.

6. COMMENT: VENTO IS WELL-INFORMED BUT OPIONATED, AND NOT
YET ESTABLISHED WITH US AS AN ACCURATE ANALYST. WE WILL CROSS-
CHECK WITH HIS OFFICE DIRECTOR, BARTOLOMEO ATTOLICO, WHO HAS AN
EXCELLENT INSIGHT AND PREDICTIVE RECORD, AND REPORT ANY DISCRE-
PANCIES. VOLPE

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